

Birmingham Reopening Inquiry In 1963 Bombing That Killed 4

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Feb. 18

(AP) — "We know who did it."

Alabama's Attorney General,

Bill Baxley, said today as he

confirmed that he had reopened

the investigation of a church

bombing that killed four 14-

year-old black girls here in

1963.

Mr. Baxley said in an inter-

view with Radio Station WERC

that the list of suspects had

been narrowed, but he declined

to predict if or when arrests

would be made. He said prema-

ture published reports about

the investigation might have

hurt.

There are some people in

Jefferson County who ought

to be pretty nervous right now.

Mr. Baxley said in an earlier

interview.

The dynamite blast at the

Sixteenth Street Baptist Church

came after the Sunday school

hour on Sept. 15, 1963, during

a time of racial disturbances

in Birmingham. The late Rev.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had

been leading civil rights

protests in the city.

About 200 persons were in

the church at the time of the

blast, and 23 were injured.

There were a score of unsolved

dynamite bombings in Birmingham at

that time.

Mayor David Vann said that

he was aware of the new inves-

tigation and that the Birming-

ham Police Department had

been told to cooperate fully.

Mr. Baxley was reported to

have the names of several per-

sons allegedly connected with

the bombing. He said that one

of the persons with whom he

talked about the case was Gary

Thomas Rowe, who appeared

before a Senate committee in

December.

The Birmingham Post-Herald

said Gary Thomas Rowe gave

the names to Mr. Baxley before

appearing before a Senate com-

mittee in December.

Mr. Rowe told the committee that

he was a Federal Bureau of

Investigation informer in Bir-

mingham during the racial

strife of the early 1960's. He

alleged that law officers gave

a group of Ku Klux Klan mem-

bers 15 minutes to assault

"freedom riders" at a bus sta-

tion before the officers inter-

vened.

After that testimony, City

Councilman Richard Arrington

asked for a reopening of the

investigation of the church

bombing.